

International champions

Scouts are all in the family

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By Renee Botta

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It is not a conventional family consisting of mom, dad and 2.5 kids. But its members agree it is a family just the same.

This Madison family has 128 sons who just happen to be the Drum Corps World International champions.

These recently named champions all share one very special grandma, Ollie May Banks, and hundreds of parents including Dori and Jerry Matson.

Banks has been the Madison Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps cook for eight years. Her blood grandson, John Banks, has been in the corps for nine years. Before that, he was in the junior corps for four years.

Banks said he does not mind sharing his grandma with the rest of the corps because they all are like brothers anyway.

Brotherhood is part of what kept Banks in the corps for so long. He "ages out" this year, which means that because he is 21 years old he can no longer be a member in the corps.

"I basically grew up in the corps," Banks said, noting he joined at age 8.

'(Ollie May Banks would) tell us if we didn't blow the horns or play the drums up to par that night. She kept us honest.'

**Steve Matson,
Madison Scouts member**

Banks may no longer march but he will continue to be a part of the corps in soul and, eventually, when he finishes school, will become an instructor with the group.

Ollie May Banks said all her hard work as a volunteer was paid off in kisses, hugs and thank-yous from the boys.

Banks was one of the toughest critics of the corps, according to Steve Matson, an eight-year corps veteran who also ages out this year.

"She'd tell us if we didn't blow the horns or play the drums up to par that night," Matson said. "She kept us honest."

In grandmotherly tradition, Ollie May Banks looked out for the boys when they were on the road and most were away from their parents.

While Ollie May was playing grandma, Matson's parents, Dori and Jerry, served as mom and dad to all the guys.

Dori Matson said having 128 sons was a "very rewarding experience." For the past 11 years, including three years with the junior corps, she and her husband, Jerry, have performed motherly and fatherly duties on the road such as chauffeuring corps members to performances, cleaning uniforms, doing repairs and taking care of finances.

Jerry Matson has been on the board of directors for 10 years. In 1983 he built the inside of the Scouts trailer to hold equipment and uniforms. Dori Matson has been the uniform coordinator for nine years and the board secretary for the last three years.

Why do they do it? For the family.

"It gets in your blood," said Dori Matson, whose family has been involved in the Madison Scouts for quite a while.

Her brother was a member of the corps when Dori Matson was a teen-ager. She used to help her mother make sandwiches for corps members to take on the road.

Matson's brother stayed on with the corps as an instructor through the 1975 world championship.

Steve Matson became interested in the corps while watching his uncle at work. At the 1975 championship performance he became hooked and two years later joined the junior corps.

Matson finished his corps career with the performance of a lifetime.

"Walking out of the stadium it felt like I could finally close the book," he said.

Banks agreed the world championship was a great way to end his involvement in the corps. "It's kind of like graduation. I'm sad that I'm done but I'm glad to be moving on."

Ollie May Banks plans to be grandma to the corps for a little while longer — at least until the Madison Scouts can find a new cook to take her place.

The Matsons have decided to stop leading a "vagabond life" and will "let go" of the corps with their sons.



State Journal photo/JOSEPH W. JACKSON III

Ollie May Banks and grandson, John, revel in a world championship.

Victorious Scouts get warm welcome

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By Renee Botta

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A few hundred people showed up bearing congratulation signs, hats, noise makers and balloons to greet the new Drum Corp World International Champions Sunday night at a parking lot on the East Side.

Two hours later, when the Madison Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps arrived, the remaining crowd gained a second wind and screamed, hooted and hollered for their champs, surrounding the buses like a fans to Elvis Presley's tour bus.

Mayor Joseph Sensenbrenner, who had already waited about two hours, left about a half hour before the Scouts arrived. But he managed to "whoop it up" with the family, friends, supporters and former corps members before he left.

The enthusiasm of Saturday night's win boiled over into Sunday

night's greeting.

Dorothy Chapek, of Monona, described the moment when she knew her son David was a world champion performer. "When they announced the second-place finisher, I stood up and screamed so loud. I didn't even listen for the score," she said. The scores were announced from 12th place on up to first.

Patrick Fahey, a 1975 Madison Scouts member who was also a world champion, said watching the corps win brought back a lot of memories.

"I've never had that feeling again with any group as I did with the corps," Fahey said.

William Veerhusen, also in the 1975 corps, said when they won in 1975 it was almost expected because they were undefeated. The corps of 1988 surprised everyone including themselves with their victory. "If I could do it again, that's the way I'd want to



Associated Press

The Madison Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps performs Saturday.

do it," Veerhusen said.

For the corps members themselves, they seemed still in shock as they ran off the buses and into the arms of waiting families and friends.

"It was absolutely incredible," said Ron Comfort, 21, who moved to Madison from Pennsylvania to be in the corps.

"Winning was just a bonus," Com-

fort said. "We could've gotten fifth and it would have felt just as good."

Danny Mooney, 20, of Searcy, Ark., said he was trembling in his shoes as they announced the winner.

"In the finals, I just knew," he said. "It's the best I've ever done."

■ Details of victory/6B

Madison Scouts capture international title

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Drum & Bugle Corps

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AP, State Journal staff

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The Madison Scouts scored 97.1 points to win the Drum Corps International World Championship Saturday night.

The Santa Clara Vanguard of Santa Clara, Calif., finished in second place with 96.9 points and the Blue Devils of Concord, Calif., took third place with 96.3 points.

The weeklong competition began with 70 groups from the United States and other countries such as Holland and Britain.

The win was Madison's first since

1975, when the corps won in Philadelphia. The Santa Clara group also finished second that year.

All 12 of this year's finalists also were the finalists in last year's competition.

The groups perform 11-minute routines which are judged on artistic and technical merit. The performances usually include elaborate props and story lines. Judges rate the percussion, brass and color guard sections.

Corps members are not allowed to be over 21 years old.

The championships, which have been held since 1972, are scheduled for Montreal next year.

Finishing in fourth place was the Garfield Cadets of Bergen County, N.J., with 96.1 points. Fifth place went to the Cavaliers of Rosemont, Ill., at 95.1.

The Phantom Regiment of Rockford and Love's Park, Ill., finished in sixth place with 93.5 points.

Other top finishers included Star of Indiana, Bloomington, Ind., 92.8; Velvet Knights of Anaheim, Calif., 90.6; The Spirit of Atlanta, Atlanta,

89.3; Suncoast Sound of Tampa Bay, Fla., 89.1; Bluecoats of Canton, Ohio, 86.7; and Sky Ryders of Hutchinson, Kan., 85.1.

The Scouts finished sixth last year and seventh in 1986.

In both of those years, the DCI competition was in Camp Randall Stadium in Madison, and the more than 60 corps could be seen and heard practicing at fields throughout the city during the week of the competition.

The Madison Scouts was founded in 1938.

Drum corps prize won by hard work

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The only pity is that it couldn't have happened in Madison.

For the past three years, the Madison Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps had marched on a thin line between excellence and a championship season. In the Drum Corps International championships held in 1985, they finished fourth in the world-class competition; in 1986 at Camp Randall Stadium, they placed seventh; and in 1987, also in Madison, they moved up a notch to sixth. Always a show-stopping corps, the Scouts were just a quarter-step away from winning it all.

Now they have won it all in Kansas City, Mo., the site of this year's DCI championships. As is often the case in hard-fought DCI competition, the Scouts won by two-tenths of 1 point on a 100-point scale, nosing out the Santa Clara (Calif.) Vanguard. (Santa Clara, by the way, placed second in 1987 by one-tenth of a point.)

Significantly, the Scouts are one of only two non-California corps ever to take top honors in DCI championship competition. And they did so by upsetting a California corps, the Concord Blue Devils, who had not lost in a competition all summer long.

Madison has plenty of reason to be proud of the 128-member corps, of which about 50 are Madison residents. But some of the unsung heroes of the Scouts' championship were the volunteers — about 500 in all — who made sure the buses ran on time, the food was hot, and the equipment properly cared for and stored.

Those who are familiar with drum corps know that what spectators see in competition is a reflection of a lot of hard work, on and off the practice field. This championship was no fluke. The Madison Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps earned every point of it.



Phinis Horton, 1218 Fish Hatchery Rd., an instructor with the drum and bugle corp., holds championship trophy and wins a hug from his grandmother, Blossom Maiden, 1351 South St.

—State Journal Photo by Joseph Jackson

Buglers hear welcome music

By SUSAN HUNTLEY
Of The State Journal Staff

The cheers of welcoming fans must have been music to the ears of the Madison Explorer Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps who returned to Madison Monday after winning the Drums Corps International Championship.

The 133-member team captured the title Saturday in Philadelphia, but Monday's crowd at the Dane County Coliseum made it clear the group had captured the loyalty of many Madison residents long before that.

The parents and families of many of the team members were on hand but several fans showed up who had no kin in the corps.

Mrs. Stella Hartwich, 2502 Calypso Rd., who drove to Philadelphia to see the competition, said she follows the activities of the team even though she has no children currently involved in

the corps and even though the activities sometimes take her far from home.

Eileen Halbleib, Middleton, brought her children, Scott, 4, and Angie, 6 months, to the festivities and shared in the crowd's enthusiasm, even though it will be a few years before Scott can publicly play the xylophone, drum or bugle that he plays around the house.

Most of the fans said their feelings for the team did not hinge on whether they won or lost; but winning certainly didn't hurt.

And winning is what the team has been up to all summer.

In Saturday's championship, the team topped last year's champs, the Santa Clara, Calif., Vanguard, before a crowd of 30,000.

Their winning performance included "Rhapsody in Blue," "The Way We Were," and a dueling banjo routine. The team also received the titles for

best marching and maneuvering and best horn line.

Their score of 92.5 is the highest score ever achieved in the history of the competition.

The corps had prepared for the event by remaining undefeated through 27 competitions this summer in several areas of Wisconsin as well as Wyoming, Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Despite their impressive victories, the team members will not spend the rest of the summer sitting back admiring their trophies.

Corps Director William Howard said the champs will perform at 7 p.m. Saturday at Loves Park, which is a suburb of Rockford, Ill., and at 7 p.m. Sunday at the Middleton High School stadium.

No doubt their fans will follow close on their marching heels, but when it comes to fans there will always be room for more.

Madison unit wins drum, bugle test

Scout AUG 17 1975

Madison has the best drum and bugle corps in the world.

Madison Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps won the Drum Corps International finals Saturday night before 30,000 onlookers at Franklin Field in Philadelphia.

They did it in style, defeating the defending champion Santa Clara, Calif., Vanguards, marking the first time a non-California team won the competition.

The event was special for Wisconsin in another way, as two other state teams finished in the top 10. The Blue Stars from La Crosse finished fifth and the Kilties from Racine came in seventh in the 80-team field, pared to 12 for the finals.

The victory was not overwhelming — Madison scored 92.5 out of 100 to Santa Clara's 91. But the victory was satisfying — Madison finished second to Santa Clara last year by only a half point.

The international championship was the first for Madison, and it was

televised live on WHA-TV, Channel 21.

The victory capped a perfect summer of competition for the corps, composed of young men aged 14-21. It was their 24th victory and fifth on their eastern trip. They have not lost.

The corps is open to any boy in Madison, regardless of musical talent. He need not be a scout. All he needs is the determination to give up his nights and weekends to train for an extensive amount of travel. This summer, the corps traveled more than 13,000 miles, competing in Wyoming, Colorado, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and the Midwest.

The Scouts and the Capitol Aires, a girls' corps, will return between 4 and 5 p.m. Monday by bus at the Monona Ave. entrance to the State Capitol. They will be greeted by Mayor Paul Soglin and Lt. Gov. Martin Schreiber.

It will be a long ride home, but after beating the world, it shouldn't matter.